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ARMY ENGINEERS IN SUPPORT OF NATION ASSISTANCE

BY

LIEUTENANT COLONEL ARTHUR B. GRAVATT III United States Army

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The Army, espically the Corps of Engineers, has been involved in nation assistance since the beginning of this country. This study seeks to examine the role of Army engineer units in nation assistance in Third World countries. It provides a general overview of nation assistance and indicates its role in our National Security Strategy. Then, using an actual nation assistance exercise conducted by the 36th Engineer Group in Costa Rica, the study identifies the principles of nation assistance. This analysis yeilds some guidlines for Army engineer that are conducting nation assistance exercises. Finally, the future of nation assistance by Army engineer units is accessed in relation to drawdowns, budget reductions and government policies.

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ARMY ENGINEERS IN SUPPORT OF NATION ASSISTANCE

AN INDIVIDUAL STUDY PROJECT

by

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> Colonel William J. Flavin Project Adviser

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U. S. Army War College Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania 17813

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INTRODUCTION

We did not come down here (to Costa Rica) just to build bridges, but to build bridges between people.

Col. Douglas R. Church Cdr. 36th Engr Gp

With these words in January 1989, the 36th Engineer Group embarked on a most ambitious mission to build seven bridges on the Peninsula De Osa in Costa Rica. Called Camino De La Paz (Bridges of Peace) this Joint Chief of Staff exercise was conducted under the command of United States Southern Command. 1

Camino De La Paz was a nation assistance exercise. Nation building is a key element of the SOUTHCOM Regional Security Strategy. Why are we Americans so involved in providing this kind of nation assistance? Why should the US Army Corps of Engineers be involved in building bridges in a Latin American country?

The Army, especially the Corps of Engineers, has been involved in nation assistance since the very beginning of this country. So this is an old mission. Throughout the development of our nation, the Army has actively assisted in opening up the West by building the infrastructure of roads, canals and railroads. We have not only helped ourselves, but other countries as well. Through our goodwill and assistance such countries as Germany, Japan and Korea currently enjoy prosperity and political stability. Being a good neighbor is part of our national culture. We assist others because it is the right thing to do.²

The Army Corps of Engineers is ideally suited to support nation assistance endeavors. The Corps has a world wide organization and the expertise to assist developing nations in construction projects. The Corps' combat heavy engineer battalions have excellent capability to conduct major construction projects in other countries. Within this one deployable organization are placed the individual skills (equipment operators, carpenters, electricians, masons and mechanics) and the equipment (graders, dozers, bucket loaders, backhoes and dump trucks) to accomplish a wide range of construction. Such resources are not easily available within an underdeveloped country. On the other hand, nation assistance projects provide excellent training opportunities for the combat heavy engineer battalion not available in the United States. In most cases, federal regulations prohibit Army engineer units from undertaking such projects as road and bridge construction in the United States. Deployment, building a base camp, completing the construction projects, and redeployment are the same missions required in war time. More importantly, the combat heavy battalion offers a cost-effective resource available to a commander on short notice. Finally, these units are organized to sustain themselves in an austere environment. 3

PURPOSE

This paper will review nation assistance, especially the role of the Corps of Engineer Combat Heavy Engineer Battalions, in delivering nation assistance. The 36th Engineer Group's Camilo De La Paz Exercise to Costa Rica will be used to

demonstrate how the principles of nation assistance have been successful.

Let's look at the strategy itself first. What are its principles? What goals does it help us achieve? How does it relate to our National Security Strategy and our National Military Strategy? Do nation assistance exercises by engineer units support FORSCOM's roles and missions and SOUTHCOM's regional security objectives?

Second, we will examine the execution of the 36th Engineer Group on its nation assistance exercise. How did they see their mission? How well did they represent the United States? Did their activities in fact support our nation assistance goals?

Third, the previous discussion will lead to guidelines which should assist future leaders and units in approaching nation assistance endeavors.

Finally, we will look to the future. Significant global changes of events will have an impact on the Army's ability to support nation assistance exercises. The drawdown, budget reductions and the change in administrations will influence the future.

NATION ASSISTANCE

Our National Security Strategy establishes the foundation for our military structure and activities. With regard to the Third World, our enduring national interest includes:

O A healthy and growing U.S. economy to ensure opportunity for individual prosperity and resources for national endeavors at home and abroad.

- O Healthy, cooperative and politically vigorous relations with allies and friendly nations.
- O A stable and secure world, where political and economic freedom, human rights and democratic institutions flourish.

These objectives can best be met through achievement of several goals, which themselves are related to nation assistance.

- O Promote a strong, prosperous and competitive US economy.
- O Promote an open and expanding international economic system.
- O Achieve cooperative international solutions to key environmental challenges.
- O Strengthen and enlarge the commonwealth of free nations that share a commitment to democracy and individual rights.
- O Establish a more balanced partnership with our allies and greater sharing of global leadership and responsibilities.
- O Promote the growth of free, democratic political institutions as the surest guarantors of human rights, economic and social progress.
- O Support aid, trade and investment policies that promote economic development and social and political progress.⁵

Each of these national goals can be jeopardized by conflict at any level. Most of our national interests are susceptible to LIC: many of them can be pursued through nation assistance.

Nation assistance plays a key role in the security assistance programs of our National Military Strategy. Through military deployments and training exercises, we demonstrate "our

commitment to alliances and contribute to regional stability throughout the world." Such programs are designed to meet the needs of host countries. "Through nation assistance, the United States can demonstrate commitment, reinforce alliance cohesion, build upon bilateral relations, and provide a moderating influence vital to regional stability and cooperation."

FORSCOM's role in support of our National Military Strategy is to provide trained and ready troop units to the CINCs. Nation assistance projects provide excellent training for combat support units such as engineer, medical and logistics support.s For combat support units, nation assistance exercises offer the same training opportunities as the National Training Center (NTC) does for the maneuver units.

FM 5-114, Engineer Operations Short of War, defines mation assistance in the following terms:

Nation assistance is defined as political, economic, informational, and military cooperation between the US and the government of another nation, with the objective of promoting internal development and the growth of sustainable institutions within that nation. This corrects conditions which cause human suffering and improves the quality of life of the nation's people. Nation assistance is conducted to promote stability within the world as well as for humanitarian reasons.

In general terms, nation assistance is a cooperative endeavor between two nations to promote internal development and institutional growth in the host nation. Nation assistance is a relatively new term; it replaces the term nation building, widely used for the past twenty years to describe US efforts to assist the Third World in internal development. But recently

the term nation building has assumed some negative connotations within other nations. They seem to resent the implication that the US is building their nation instead of themselves. Hence, the term nation assistance has emerged as the new designation for such activities. It implies the host nation is in charge and that the US is assisting them in self-determination and internal development. Though the terms have a different meanings in the Third World, we tend to use them interchangeably.

Nation assistance is an excellent program for supporting our National Security Strategy. 'Nation-building (assistance) seeks to reduce or eliminate the causes of dissatisfaction by assisting the Third World in their efforts to achieve a stable and peaceful society." LTG H. J. Hatch, the past Chief of Engineers, nicely describes the policy:

This suggests that the United States should be assisting the governments of developing nations to gain legitimacy, and earn popular support. To do this, these nations need effective public and private institutions to meet the basic needs of the citizens. A component of many of these institutions is the infrastructure which is essential for economic development. By infrastructure I mean transportation, communications, and water supply networks, health care facilities, and schools...Infrastructure opens the door to productivity, economic opportunity, and a higher standard of living. The lack of infrastructure contributes to political instability.(10)

Nation assistance thus offsets the impacts of poor economic conditions and poverty. Our assistance helps friendly governments provide basic human needs and promotes the perception and reality of effective government on which stability rests.

Some basic principles guide our involvement in nation

assistance:

O Nation assistance projects should be in concert with our national objectives for the host nation. We should not be perceived as directing the assistance. The host people should see their own government as leading the effort. One goal of nation assistance is to provide a platform from which the host nation government can demonstrate strength and control of the nation. This encourages faith, trust and pride of the people in their government, it also fosters stability.

O Nation assistance must meet a genuine need. The best return on nation assistance comes from programs or projects that support development or humanitarian goals. Assistance should reach the majority of the population in the area, and not serve special interest groups. For the best effect, projects should be delivered as a total package, completed in a short time period.

O US personnel must closely coordinate nation assistance projects with local authorities and the general population in the area of operations. The purpose of nation assistance is to have a positive effect. Misunderstandings can lead to confusion, to loss of respect for the host government or to loss of support for the project. Getting off on the right foot with the host nation helps establish mutual respect and cooperation. A road-building project in Honduras by Army engineer units offers an example of how good intentions and poor coordination can cause confusion and discontent among local citizens. The commander of the exercise was conducting a route reconnaissance of the proposed road when he came upon a farm family disassembling their home and moving to a new location. Asked why he was moving, the farmer stated he was told to move by the government because they were taking the

land for the new road. The commander never intended to route the road through the farmer's home. Since the farmer had already moved and to maintain the creditibility of the government, the commander changed the road to go through his farm land. In addition, soldiers assisted the family in rebuilding and made sure the displaced farmer's new home was better than his old place. 11 We are the guest. We must coordinate the execution of the projects.

O Nation assistance must include training for the host nation. Nation assistance exercises provide an excellent opportunity to train central and local government institutions in such activities as planning, coordinating, funding and managing complex operations. The success of the operations instills confidence and builds the foundation for them to undertake future improvements.

Our principal objective, however, is to build stability in the Third World nations. Carefully selected projects which support our security objectives, meet the needs of the host nation and its people, and include coordination and training contribute to successful nation assistance endeavors. Conversely, uncoordinated, confusing nation assistance projects cause mistrust and turmoil, which can lead to further instability. So nation assistance must address issues important to the host nation. 12

THE EXERCISE CAMINO DE LA PAZ

Since the mid 80's, SOUTHCOM has called upon Corps of Engineer troop units—both active and reserve—to support their nation assistance operations in Latin America. General Fred Woerner, former CINCSOUTH, asserted that "the engineer is a fundamental element of the strategy." He saw the engineers as a maneuver element, equal in nation assistance to the infantry in combat. The engineers are the infantry in fighting economic and social problems of the host nation through the development of the infrastructure.

Camino De La Paz was the latest of several JCS exercises designed to meet SOUTHCOM's requirements. For the past several years, exercises Ahuas Tara, Minuteman, Cabanas, Blazing Trails, and Fuertes Caminos have constructed major roads and bridges in Panama and Honduras. These exercises were all highly successful in extending government services to rural areas and improving economic opportunities.

Camino De La Paz was a JCS exercise to support bridge building projects in Costa Rica. FORSCOM, in response to a SOUTHCOM request for engineer units to support the exercise, contacted the 36th Engineer Group and asked them to consider the exercise. The 36th, with previous experience in similar JCS exercises, took a unique approach to accepting this mission. They had learned that the actual construction of the bridges, though important, was not the main mission. They realized that supporting SOUTHCOM's regional security objectives and being good representatives of the American people would in the long run be more beneficial. With those objectives in mind, they began to

plan for the exercise.

Initially, Camino De La Paz was to be a limited force presence exercise. SOUTHCOM wanted to deploy a small company size engineer unit for a period of sixty days to build one or two bridges on the Osa Peninsula. This peninsula extends from the southwestern corner of Costa Rica. It is a farming and cattle-raising region inhabited by over ten thousand people. only community is the small town of Puerto Jimenez at the southern end of the peninsula. Overland access to the area is available only by one two-lame gravel road which is cut by seven rivers. During the dry season, the local people ford these rivers to carry products to market and conduct normal economic activities. But during the rainy season, all seven rivers flood and are impassable. For the inhabitants, everything then comes to a halt. The only access is by boat from Puerto Jimenez across the gulf to the town of Golfito. Those caught between the rivers are stranded until the rivers subside. (Map is at Appendix 1.)

After receiving initial guidance from SOUTHCOM and FORSCOM, the 36th deployed a survey team to Costa Rica to start the initial planning. Contacts with the embassy, the country team, other US agencies and the local government were established. During a visit with the mayor and other citizens of Puerto Jimenez, the significance of the proposed bridges became apparent. The survey team realized that building just one or two bridges would not solve the problem of transportation into and out of the area during the rainy season. The only solution was to build seven bridges. Of course, this greatly increased the scope and the magnitude of the exercise.

To gain support for this ambitious exercise, the group developed a concept and briefed it to FORSCOM and SOUTHCOM. To

FORSCOM the focus of the briefing was on the realistic training opportunities not available at home for the unit, with only passing mention of the critically needed infrastructure for the host nation. With SOUTHCOM, the briefing focused on the support to their regional security objectives. SOUTHCOM recognized the expanded plan as a complete project which could be accomplished in a short period of time; it would offer direct and immediate economic, political and social benefits to a significant number of people. The exercise clearly supported our national security objectives and met all the imperatives for nation assistance. Its concept thereby approved, the 36th accepted the expanded mission. Their bridge-building exercise would truly offer nation assistance.

The details of the funding process for this exercise are beyond the scope of this paper. But, in general, the funding was similar to other JCS exercises. The only difference was the active involvement of United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in the purchase of the Baily bridges. Humanitarian and Civil Assistance (HCA) funds were authorized under Title 10 US Code, Section 401. These funds were used to support medical and dental programs and for the construction of community and medical facilities.

The group established the following mission objectives:

- O Create and maintain warm relations between the Task Force and the Host Nation.
- O Construct seven bridges on the main road network of the Osa Peninsula to provide year round access by commercial vehicles to the Peninsula.
- O Construct seven school buildings, one dispensary building, and two community centers in nine communities on the Peninsula.

- O Conduct medical assistance visits (MEDRETE's) in six communities on the peninsula.
- O Conduct as many civic action projects as possible in the region during the deployment.
- O Maintain the combat readiness of task force personnel and equipment. 14

To accomplish these missions, the 36th identified four groups to whom support was vital to the success of the exercise: the national government, the local government, the media, and the local citizens. Each group required special attention. They each had their own agenda. So the 36th had to effectively balance the concerns of each group to maintain cooperation and build trust.

THE NATIONAL COVERNMENT

Prior to the actual deployment of the troops and equipment, the group initiated a close working relationship with the national government agencies involved with the bridge construction. The bridge design was truly a joint effort. Engineers from the 36th Group and the Costa Rican Ministry of Public Works and Transportation worked together on the site survey and the design. The group let the host engineers take the lead. It was important for them to gain a sense of responsibility for the bridges. Once the bridges were completed, the host nation would be responsible for maintaining them. For this reason, the design was kept simple; all seven bridges shared a common design.

The funds for the purchase of the bridge materials were provided by USAID to the government of Costa Rica. The

management of funds presented a great challenge for the host nation governmental institutions. As with most Third World nations, a certain amount of corruption exists, so some of the funds were diverted from their intended purpose. However, with the strong support of the 36th and the country team, the funds were returned. Thus an important lesson of discipline and integrity was demonstrated to the host nation. The loss of these funds threatened the completion of the bridges. Had this occured, both Costa Rica and the US would have lost faith with the people of the Osa Peninsula.

The deployment of over nine hundred US Army personnel to Costa Rica through the capital of San Jose presented another opportunity to build friendship. Costa Rica does not have a military. Thus many government officials were concerned about the image of having such a large force of US Army soldiers in the country. Specifically, the government requested that the American soldiers not carry weapons. Normally, our soldiers deploy with their assigned weapons. In consideration of Costa Rica's sensitivity to a perceived threat to their sovereignty, two-part arrangement was agreed upon. First, the Costa Rican Security Force (the National Police) provided a security force to guard and protect the Task Force. Second, Costa Rica provided their own weapons and ammunition for the soldiers. These weapons were secured in the basecamp; they would be issued only if required. For the duration of the exercise American soldiers were never seen with weapons. This small concession demonstrated to the people of Costa Rica that our mission was a mission of peace and friendship.

Any exercise of this size requires host nation support.

Contracts were needed to support the bridge-building operations

and for logistical support to the base camp. These contracts offered an economic incentive to local business organizations. When possible, contracts were awarded to small businesses, similar to the A76 concept in the United States. The intent was to contract requirements to benefit small struggling companies with good reputations, not large established companies. This procedure worked well. Selected companies were eager to provide the contracted services professionally and efficiently. The use of small contractors was widely known and appreciated among the people.

Though Costa Rica does not have an Army which would have trained as part of the exercise, we did receive assistance from both the leaders and workers from the Ministry of Public Works and Transportation. They were visible during all phases of the project from design through construction. In effect, the project was 'owned' by the Costa Ricans, and the U.S. soldiers were the work force. In reality, we coached the host team through the process and ensured that all went well. This project was completed in 90 days. This pace greatly impressed the Costa Rican leaders and workers. Their work pace and intensity are much slower than that of Americans. The project demonstrated to them what can be accomplished when effort and resources are applied under strong leadership.

THE LOCAL COVERNMENT

Beyond dealing with the national government, the 36th had to establish an additional dialogue with the local government on the Osa Peninsula. This was most important, for these were

specifically the people for whom the bridges were being built. In addition, over nine hundred American soldiers would be moving into the peninsula. They would be highly visible, and their presence would affect the daily life of the people. During the initial coordination meetings, the civic council seemed skeptical. They had been promised things before, only to have them undelivered. Once we assured them the bridges would be built, they began to express their local concerns.

A special committee was established between the citizens and the 36th to address all issues. This committee monitored all activities related to the project: the construction of bridges, medical assistance visits (MEDRETEs), community construction projects, citizens' concerns about these projects. The committee included a representative from all the local communities; it was routinely briefed on all operations. Along with representatives from the committee, the 36th visited every land owner affected by the construction. We questioned them about the rivers, informed them of our plans, and asked for their advice. We made absolutely sure that the land owner approved of our use of his land and understood what we were going to do. For example, the farmers expressed concern for the loss of their fences along the access to the bridges. To solve this problem, when fences were moved for right-of-ways, new fence material was given to the owner. These efforts favorably impressed on the land owners. As construction progressed and changes had to be made, they became more willing to help.

THE LOCAL CITIZENS

Nothing concerned the 36th more than its relationship with the local citizens. Neither the group nor the local residents understood the impact of such a large number of soldiers locating in the area. To establish bonds of friendship between the citizens and the soldiers, an open house has held on a Sunday afternoon. It satisfied their basic curiosity about the base camp. They saw how the soldiers lived and observed our equipment. The open house included a briefing about the bridge construction, a tour of the base camp, equipment displays, and refreshments. Local leaders and representatives from the Ministry of Public Works and Transportation were present to answer questions and to take requests for assistance. Over eight hundred local peninsula residents attended the open house. This event opened communications and built trust between the citizens and the soldiers.

Every effort was taken to contract base camp services to local citizens. Tire changers, refuge collectors, bug sprayers and dining facility workers were all retained through local contracts. This contributed to the local economy. Also, these workers functioned as an informal information exchange for both the citizens and the group.

Food, clothing and toys were collected by soldier's families at home and airlifted to the local area. The distribution of these items to Costa Rican families identified by local leaders and churches dramatized the goodwill of the soldiers present in the area and of all Americans. Such attention to little things that often go overlooked by those perceived to have everything helped to build a strong positive atmosphere between the local citizens and the soldiers. We provided transportation for workers, participated in local sporting events, assisted in fire fighting and other emergencies, and generally showed our appreciation through gifts and individual mementos. All of these

amenities contributed to a climate of mutual respect.

Most impressive to the local citizens was the work ethic demonstrated by our soldiers. Observing the soldiers work on the bridge sites from early morning to late in the day in extremely hot weather earned their admiration and respect. Many citizens offered to help in any way they could. The soldiers also wanted to get the citicens involved so they would assume some ownership in the bridges and the other community projects. Toward the end of the bridge construction, time was running short and hundreds of gabbons--wire baskets filled with rocks to protect the bridge abutments from erosion--neded to be filled. We approached the local leaders and asked if they would like to help. The response was overwhelming. Over a thousand citizens of all ages showed up for "Gabbon Day." Soldiers and citizens worked side by side on each bridge site. They did not quite until the job was done. One gentleman in his seventies expressed how proud he was to be able to help the young American soldiers build the bridges. He promised that the citizens were going to ensure the bridges were properly maintained.

All of these efforts, taken as a whole, were extremely important to the group's mission. The 36th consistently tried to work for and with the citizens of the peninsula. The soldiers were regularly reminded to be polite and respectiful to all citizens and their customs. During the deployment there was not a single incident between the soldiers and the citizens.

THE MEDIA

No group was considered more important than the media. We needed their support from the begining to get our story to the

people so they would understand what American soldiers were doing and why.

The media questioned our motives. What were the real reasonss for so many American soldiers to come at the same time? Why would we build the bridges? Did the bridges or the base camp have anything to do with Panama? How long were we really going to stay? Were the soldiers going to have weapons? These were all legitimate questions. Our approach with the media was to be totally open and receptive. With the support of the Ministry of Public Works and Transportation and the Country Team, joint news releases were provided explaining in detail the exercise.

Once the base camp was established and construction underway, we conducted two major media days to brief reporters and to give them an opportunity to see the operations, to talk with soldiers and local citizens. Because of our total approach to the exercise and our concern for the citizens of Costa Rica, all of the media coverage was positive and supportive.

In addition to the media coverage, the Task Force published a newsletter in Spanish twice a month. This newsletter explained the status of construction. It told what was going to happen next and offered interesting stories about the soldiers. The openness with which the Task Force operated eliminated any perception of an ulterior motive.

NATION ASSISTANCE GUIDELINES

Camino De La Paz was a success. For FORSCOM the exercise provided an opportunity to deploy ten units totaling over nine hundred soldiers from five installations. The units and soldiers were able to practice their war timemission in an austere Third

World environment. The exercise supported CINC, SOUTHCOM's Regional Security Objectives of improving national stability by assisting in the development of infrastructure which improves economic growth and the welfare of its citizens. For the government of Costa Rica, the exercise provided training for the Ministry of Public Works and Transportation and demonstrated their ability to meet the needs of the citizens of the Osa Peninsula. For the ten thousand citizens of the peninsula, the bridges brought economic opportunity, freedom of movement and a better life.

Nation assistance operations for Army engineer units are different from their normal support to combat operations. In addition to responding to the normal chain of command, the unit must plan, coordinate and execute operations with another government. From the experiences of Camino De La Paz, some general conclusions can be drawn to its success.

Be a good listener. Unfortunately, Americans are known for taking a "know-it-all" attitude with other nations. This approach does not work with nation assistance. To understand a nation's needs, we must first listen to their requirements and problems. Then, and only then, can we develop programs and exercises that fill those needs. Effective nation assistance involves listening to both the host nation and US institutions to present a unified effort to the people.

Be patient. To many nations, Americans are impatient, wanting everything done now, today. In developing nation assistance exercises, sufficient time must be allowed for the host nation to prepare and come to agreement on the exercise. In most cases, no one person or agency is totally in charge so agreements take time and are built through consensus, not

executive decision-making. Great care is necessary to prevent the perception of infringing on the host nation's sovereignty.

Be flexible. Coordination and cooperation between all parties is a must. But even with the best of planning and intentions things will go wrong. In general, Third World nations do not work at the same level of intensity as the US. Therefore, we must build sufficient flexibility into nation assistance exercises to ensure success. Failure to do so can lead to hard feelings between participants, defeating one objective of nation assistance—friendly cooperation between nations. During Camino De La Paz, we realized that Costa Rica was not moving fast enough on purchasing the bridges. In fact, the bridges arrived at the construction sites three weeks late. The Task Force recognized the problem and was able to adjust the construction schedule to account for the late delivery. Through allowing flexibility, we were able to avoid an embarrassment of the national government to the citizens of the Osa Peninsula.

Be a Team Builder. The bridges were an important part of Camino De La Paz, but just as important was building strong, independent, democratic institutions within the Costa Rica government. 'Bottom line: It is essential that citizens of the host nation play a meaningful role in every facet of a program to the greatest extent possible." The national and local leaders must maintain credibility with the local citizens. They must be involved and visible gaining the support and confidence of the people. We are in a supporting role because we are there for only a short time.

Be Diplomatic. We must understand the cultural differences between the two countries and between individuals. Both at

national and individual levels, values are different. So we should not automatically assume ours are right and theirs wrong or less important. Any display of disapproval of their ways demonstrates a lack of trust and confidence that could jeopardize the intent of nation assistance. We should strive to improve and reinforce their strong traits and encourage the adoption of others values when their approach seems counterproductive— as when we insisted that the funding for the seven bridge project not be siphoned off for bribes.

Do complete, short duration projects. This is a win-win-win situation. For the Army, nation assistance exercises provide great training at a low cost. For the national and local governments of Costa Rica, the exercises demonstrate strong national will and an ability to help their citizens. For the citizens, the exercises mean a better life. In the case of Camino De La Paz, the seven bridges had an immediate economic and social impact on the Osa Peninsula.

The success of Camino De La Paz is best expressed in the words of Dr. Oscar Arias, the President of Costa Rica, at the opening ceremony for the bridges.

I think that the construction of these bridges and roads have served to join two brother countries that have worked hand in hand for years to show the world the values we share... But what we assimilate is much more—the respect for democracy, the respect for other ideas, the love of peace, and the conviction that the problems inside a society and between countries can be solved through dialogue. It is always more worthwhile to use reasoning before the use of force.

Friends of Osa, I used to say in the political campaign that it is more important in life to lay bridges to join than to build walls to divide and

I want to recognize this beautiful symbol. Today the American soldiers are giving us seven bridges that obviously come to join the two countries closer. The community of Osa will be forever grateful.

We are a country that loves God and a country that never forgets a friend that gave the assistance to build a more prosperous Costa Rica for our children. For all your work, you will never be forgotten. On the contrary, there will be a special place in the heart of every Costa Rican, but fundamentally in the hearts of the men, woman, and children of the Osa peninsula. Thank you and God bless you. 15

The presence of Dr. Arias at the opening ceremonies was a significant event. As president of an independent country which does not have an army, he normally does not associate himself with military organizations or soldiers. Yet he had received such positive reports about this exercise that he made an exception and thus personally thanked the task force for their efforts. For the task force and the soldiers, his presence signified that they had accomplished all of their missions. (Letters and messages acknowledging the Task Force's accomplishments are at Appendix 2.)

THE FUTURE

Nation assistance exercises for Army engineer units hit the high point during the 80's. Originally, the exercises started to provide SOUTHCOM engineer support to develop infrastructure, mainly roads and bridges, to support possible future military operations. The exercises became so popular for both the engineer units and the host countries that they were expanded to include other nonmilitary related projects. Active Army, National Guard and Reserve engineer units as well as Navy and Air Force units have

conducted exercises in Panama, Honduras, Costa Rica, Belize, Bolivia, and Ecquador. Most of these exercises have been at the battalion task force level, but a few at the company level.

Unfortunately, the 98's bring a new perspective to Army engineer nation assistance exercises. Three factors are influencing the current climate: First is the Army drawdown. There are fewer units to participate in deployments, and there will be even fewer in the next three years. Two of seven CONUS combat heavy engineer battalions are scheduled for deactivation by 1995. The five remaining will lose one company from their structure. Additional cuts are anticipated as the Clinton Administration moves forward with their proposals.

Second, with the drawdown comes reduced budgets. The funds are not there for large exercises, or for many exercises of any scope. The SOUTHCOM Engineer Requirements for FY 93-96 call for fewer and smaller exercises. Company and platoon size exercises will become the norm. (See Appendix 3.)

Lastly, the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works, MS. Nancy P. Dorne, directed on 16 December 1991 that the marketing of nation assistance by the Corps of Engineers be terminated immediately. (See Appendix 4.) This will halt the Corps of Engineers' practice of announcing it availability to perform military and civic action projects in cooperation with other nations. The Corps has been assisting in the development of projects and in getting them funded and scheduled. With this directive, the Corps' ability to pursue nation assistance is greatly reduced. Hopefully, but unlikely, the new Democratic Administration will recend this directive or, at least, reduce its severity.

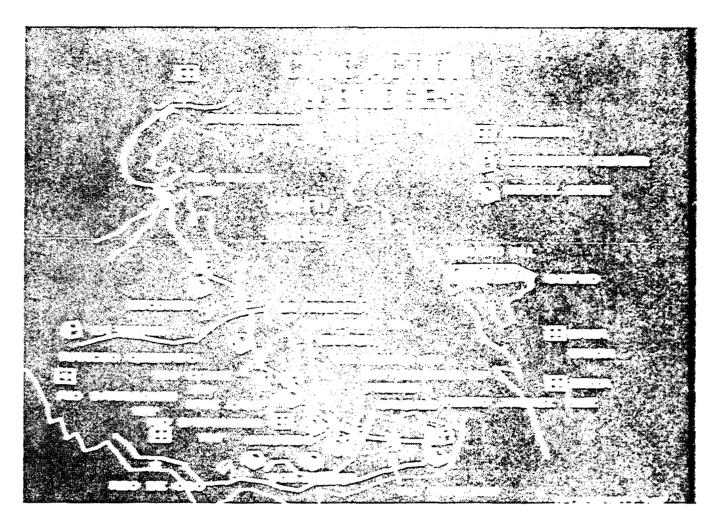
CONCLUSIONS

The trend to downscale the military capability in nation assistance is detrimental to future peace enhancement activities. The end of the Cold War and the breakup of the Soviet Union opens a new spectrum of opportunities for Army involvement. Operations other then war— to include peacekeeping, peacemaking, peace enhancement and peacetime operations— are becoming more of the norm then actual combat. Nation assistance is both a positive and vital part of a peace building environment. A continuation of nation assistance exercise will help to build US goodwill and provide improved infrastructure which thus provides developing countries with the opportunity for independent growth.

The role of the Corps of Engineers in nation assistance is an important one. The learning curve on how to do nation assistance has been a long on but one indicating steady improvement.

Initially, mistakes were made in planning, coordination and execution. As more exercises were carried out and more officers and soldiers became aware of the pitfalls, performance improved. But more than likely, as we become less engaged in nation assistance, we will lose this knowledge and the experience base. The guidelines and examples outlined in this paper demonstrate a way for Army engineer units to approach nation assistance.

Army engineer units have the capabilities to provide effective nation assistance. They have proven themselves in the past. The results of nation assistance are regional stability and enhanced national security, which are our business and in our national interest. Let us hope the future will allow us to continue to exercise this aspect of our national strategy.



EXERCISE MAP

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY HEADQUARTERS SITH ENGINEER GROUP (COMBAT) FORT SEMING, GEORGIA \$1905-5023

AFYK-CO

20 May 89

MEMORANDUM FOR

Commander, 43d Engineer Combat Battalion (H), Fort Benning, GA 31905

Commander, 67th Maintenance Battalion, Fort Benning, GA 31905 Commander, 215th Finance Support Unit, Fort Benning, GA 31905

Commander, HHC, 36th Engineer Group (C), Fort Benning, GA 31905-5823

SUBJECT: CAMINO DE LA PAZ 89

1. I would like for you to share these comments with all your leaders and soldiers who made this Joint Chiefs-of-Staff Exercise one of, if not the most successful deployments to Central America.

2. Our goals were multi-faceted, and you met them all. I take great pride in your achievements, and all can be justly proud that each soldier made a great contribution to our Country's goal of peace, nation-building and strengthening a young democracy. You have set a new standard for all others to follow, and for yourselves as well.

3. Sincerest congratulations on such unprecedented success. You will be remem-

bered by the people of Costa Rica for many, many decade).

COLEN

Commanding



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY HEADQUARTERS UNITED STATES ARMY INFANTRY CENTER FORT BENNING, GEORGIA SIBOS-8000



MEPLY TO AFTERNOON OF

ATZB-SGS (672)

15 May 1989

MEMORANDUM FOR Colonel Douglas R. Church, Commander, 36th Engineer Group (Combat) (Heavy), Fort Benning, Georgia 31905-5823

SUBJECT: Commendation for "Camino de la Paz"

- 1. I am pleased to note the comments expressed in the attached message from General Frederick F. Woerner, Jr. Commander in Chief, U.S. Southern Command, noting the significant impact the 36th Engineer Group made during their deployment to Costa Rica for exercise "Camino de la Paz".
- 2. Comments elicited from President Arias of Costa Rica and Major General Loffeks underscore their sincers appreciation for the extremely dedicated and professional effort expended by the soldiers of the 36th Engineer Group.
- 3. Your soldiers represented, through diligent labor, superior skill, and determination, the best that the United States has to offer. The seven bridges and 3.2 kilometers of road they constructed is a legacy to be enjoyed by the populace of remote Costa Rican villages for decades to come. They can be proud of their participation in this worthy endesvor and the manner in which they represented the U.S. Army and our nation.
- 4. Please convey my personal pride and deepest appreciation to all of the members of your command for their contributions toward the success of "Camino de la Paz".

Enc l

MICHAEL V. SPICELMIR Major General, USA Commanding ATC _ IG

FAO _

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PRIORITY

APPENDIX 2 28

IN WHICH YOU CONDUCTED YOUR INGINEER MISSION. NOTE WORTHY WERE YOUR

555 041020 may 89

PR IORITY

EXCELLENT NATION TO NATION RELATIONSHIPS ESTABLISHED RETWEEN THE TASK FORCE AND THE COSTA RICAN MOSTS. THE GUALITY OF THE CONSTRUCTION. AND THE EFFECTIVE INCORPORATION OF THE AIR NATIONAL

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LONIFIMITION TO THE US SOUTHERN COMMAND'S STRATEGY OF USING
ENGINEERS IN A NON-HOSTILE. NATION HUILDING ROLE IN LATIN MERICA.
THESE TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES REEMPHASTZE THE KEY ROLE COMMINED
EXERCISES PLAY AS PART OF OUR FOREIGN POLICY TO ENHANCE OUN
MELATIONSHIPS WITH DUR LATIN AMERICAN ALLIES AND FRIENDS. WELL
UONE! GEN WOERNER. USCINCSO.

6T #0303

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY HEADQUARTERS FORCES COMMAND FORT MCPHERSON, GEORGIA 30330-6000



REPLY TO ATTENTION OF

FCJ3-OX

11 July 1989

MEMORANDUM THRU Commander, United States Army Infantry Center and Fort Benning, Fort Benning, GA 31905-5000

FOR Commander, 36th Engineer Group, Fort Benning, GA 31905-5823

SUBJECT: Memorandum of Commendation

1. It gives me great pleasure to commend you and your command for the excellent job performed in Costa Rica during Exercise CAMINO DE LA PAZ 89. Your mission was conducted with the highest level of professionalism and skill. As a representative of the United States, the 36th Engineer Group displayed the unique ability to be both soldiers and statesmen. As President Oscar Arias of Costa Rica said at the dedication ceremony, "It is good to see soldiers build bridges for peace rather than walls for war."

2. CAMINO DE LA PAZ 89 has been the most successful FORSCOM supported engineer exercise conducted in Southern Command to date and serves as a role model for other like exercises. Again,

thank you for a job well done.

COLIN L. POWELL General, USA

Commander in Chief

SOUTHCOM ENGINEER REQUIREMENTS FY 93 - 96

JCS EXERCISES:

Area of Support	1993 Target	1994 Target	1995 Target	1996 Target
CENTAM (Reserve)	Guatemala(FC)	Guatemala(FC) Honduras (AT)	Nicuragua(FC)	Nicuragua(FC) Honduras (AT)
PANAMA (Reserve)	Panama (FC)	Panama (FC)	Panama (FC)	Panama (FC)
SOUTH AMERICA (Active)	Bolivia (FC)	Bolivia (FC) (Peru ?)	Bolivia (FC)	Bolivia (FC) (Peru ?)

Deployments For Training (DFT)

Area of Support	1993 Target	1994 Target	1995 Target	1996 Target
CENTAM	Cbt Hvy Co+ (Hor)	Cbt Hvy Co+ (Hor)	Cbt Hvy Co+ (Hor)	Cbt Hvy Co+ (Hor)
PANAMA	Port Const Co			
SOUTH	Cbt Hvy Plt (Vert)	Cbt Hvy Plt (Vert)	Cbt Hvy Plt (Vert)	Cbt Hvy Plt (Vert)
	Cbt Hvy Co+	Cbt Hvy Co+ (Hor)	Cbt Hvy Co+ (Hor)	Cbt Hvy Co+ (Hor)
	Cbt Hvy Co- (Vert)	Cbt Hvy Co- (Vert)	Cbt Hvy Co- (Vert)	Cbt Hvy Co- (Vert)
	Port Const or Rock Crushing	Port Const or Rock Crushing	Port Const or Rock Crushing	Port Const or Rock Crushing
	Well Drilling (2)	Well Drilling (2)	Well Drilling (2)	Well Drilling (2)

Overseas Deployment For Training (ODTs)

: ...

1	1993	1994	1995	1996
	Target	Target	Target	Target
CENTAM & PANAMA (NGB)	24 Rotations	24 Rotations	24 Rotations	24 Rotations
	of 50 pax ea	of 50 pax ea	of 50 pax ea	of 50 pax ea
CENTAM & PANAMA (USAR)	12 Rotations of 50 pax ea	12 Rotations of 50 pax ea APPENDIX 3	12 Rotations of 50 pax ea	12 Rotations of 50 pax ea

31



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY THE TALE CONTROL ASSISTANCE OF STREET WASHINGTON, DC 20310-0103

1991



MEMORANDUM FOR THE CHIEF OF ENGINEERS

SUBJECT: Corps International Activities

This memorandum reiterates the guidance I gave at our meeting on September 27, 1991, to Generals Edgar, Williams and Sobke regarding international activities by the Corps. The following guidance is to be implemented immediately, both in the South Atlantic Division and in any other Corps components engaged in international activities that are not exclusively in support of U.S. military forces overseas.

- Marketing of so-called "nation assistance" should be terminated immediately at the Headquarters, U. S. Army Corps of Engineers (HQUSACE), division and field levels.
- All promotional materials for nation assistance and international activities are to be withdrawn.
- The staff in HQUSACE working on nation assistance are to be brought under the umbrella of the Office of Intergovernmental Support and are to focus their efforts managing ongoing international work, not on concept development and marketing for nation assistance.
- The commitment of Corps resources to international activities can only be made by the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works). The Corps does not have the authority to commit resources to international work without prior approval from this office.
- The Divisions engaged in international activities are to submit monthly information reports that address both the status of ongoing work and all new requests for Corps assistance. Because of the time sensitivity of this information, these reports should be submitted concurrently to this office and to HQUSACE. The first monthly report is due to this office on November 1, 1991.

The above guidance applies to all international activities of the Corps that are not exclusively in support of the U.S. military forces overseas. It includes work for other U.S. agencies, work for foreign governments and international organizations, security assistance and support to the regional Commanders-in-Chief. I will issue more comprehensive guidance shortly that will address these concerns in more detail.

Nancy P. Dorn

Assistant Secretary of the Army

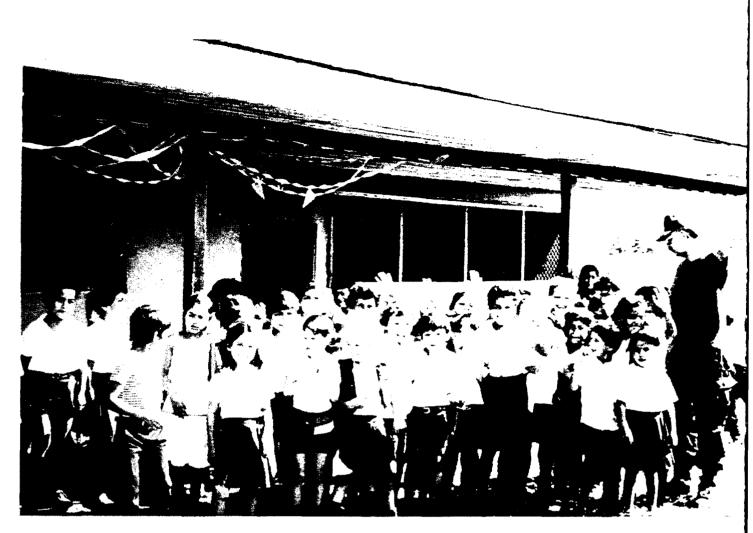
(Civil Works)

APPENDIX 4

32



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Opening day for a new two room school. Materials were funded under Civic Action. Chapter 20, Title 10 U.S. Code



Gabbon Day. One thousand local of tens worked on the seven bridge is tes to show their apprediation for the sold ens efforts to make their life better



Dr. Oscar Arias, President of Costa Rica, and Col. Douglas R. Church crossing the new bridge on the Rio Tigre at the Opening Ceremonies



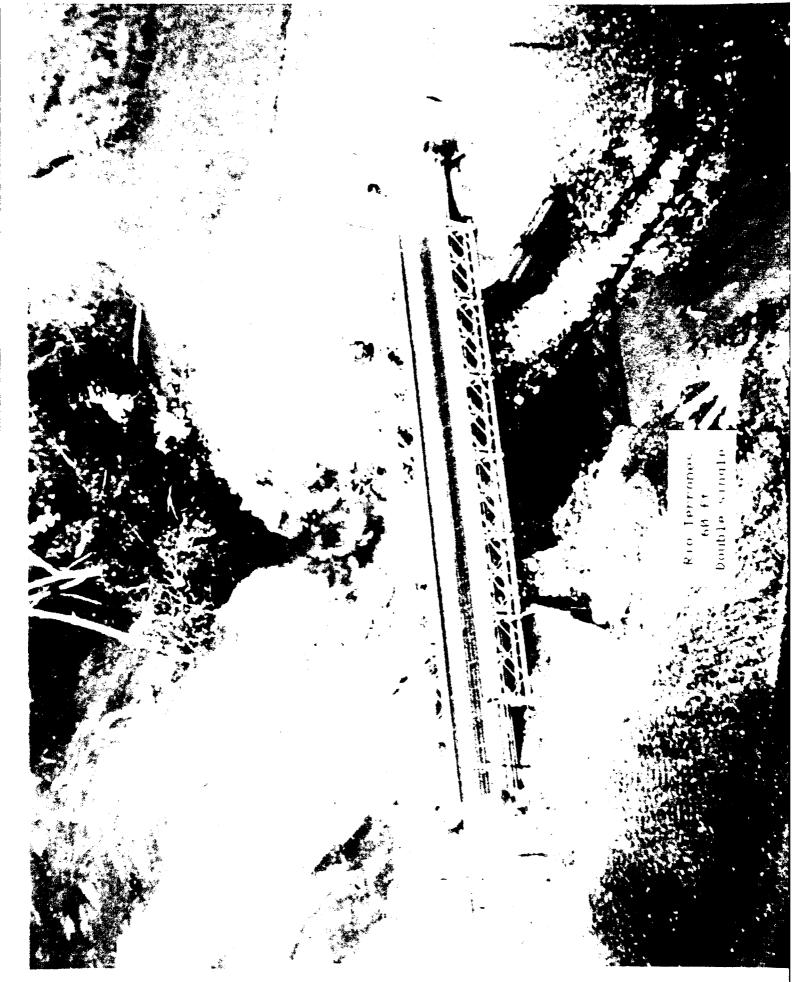


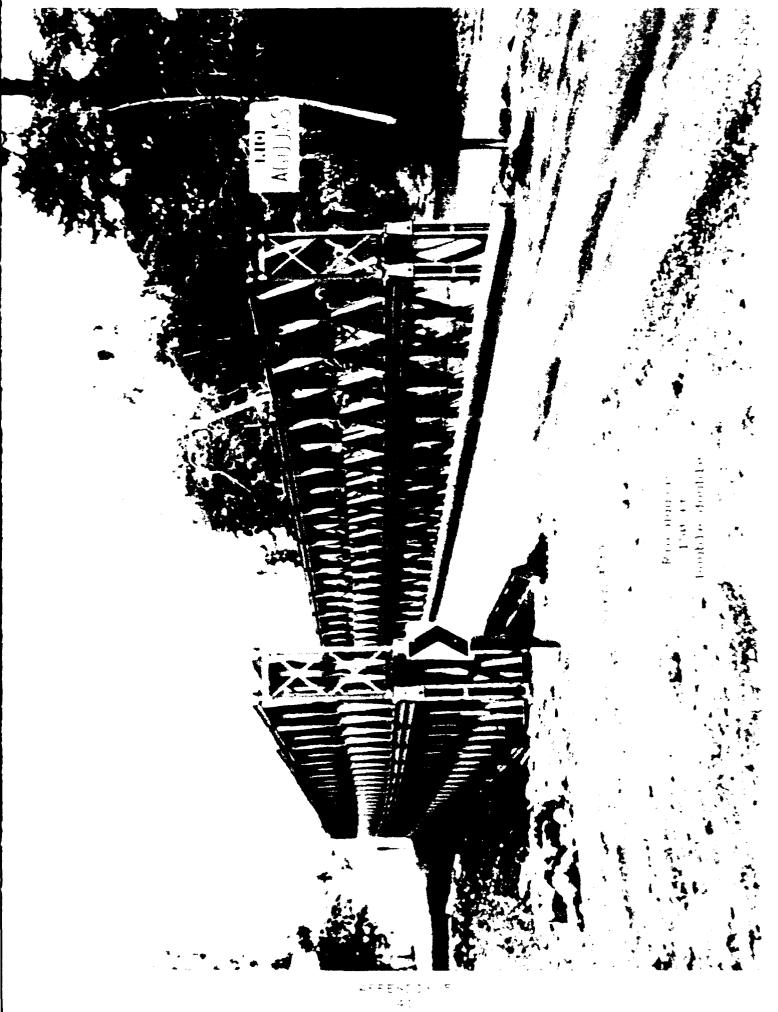
APPENDIX 5

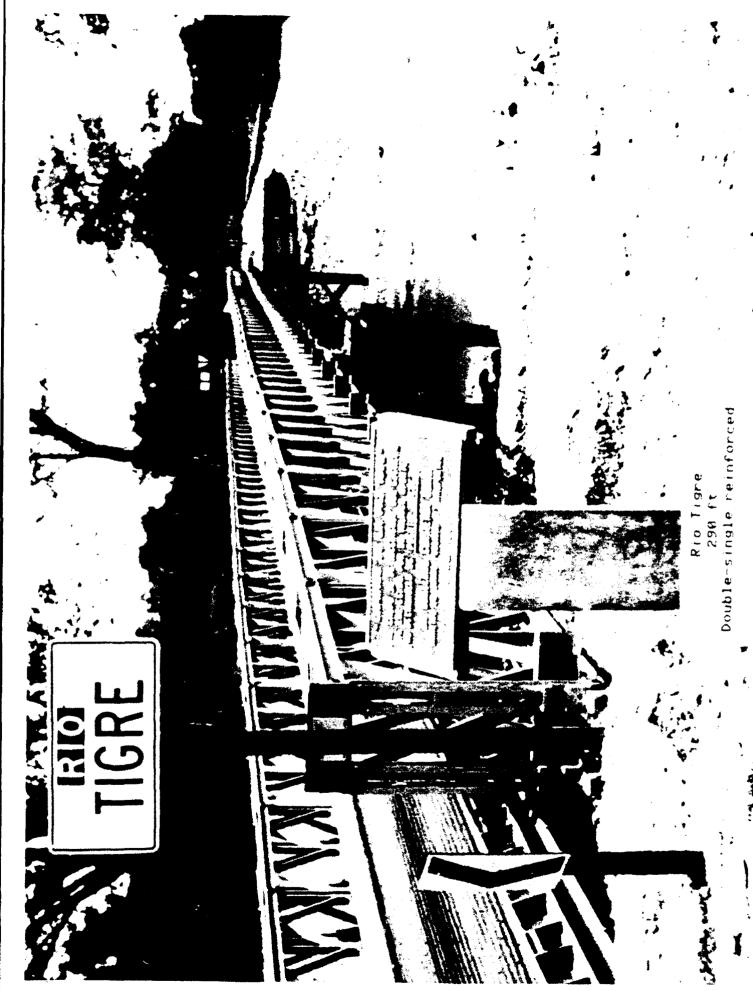


Rio Sabala 70 ft Double-single

APPENDIX 5







APPENDIX 5



APPENDIX 5

ENDNOTES

After Action Report, Camino De La Paz 89- Costa Rica (Fort Benning, Ga.), 8.

2Robert R. Cababa, <u>Nation Assistance: A</u>
<u>Misunderstood Mission</u> (Newport: Naval War College, 1991), 3.

3Allen C. Estes, <u>The Role of Combat Heavy Engineer</u>
<u>Battalions in Nation Assistance</u> (Fort Leavenworth: U.S. Army
Command and General Staff College, 1991), 3.

The White House, <u>National Security Strategy of the United States</u> (Washington: GPO, 1991), 3-4.

5_{Ibid}

James R. Locher, 'Peacetime Engagement," National Defense (December 1989): 28.

⁷U. S. Joint Staff, <u>National Military Strategy of the United States</u> (Washington: GPO), 14.

8U. S. Department of the Army, <u>Engineer Operations</u>
Short of War (Washington: GPD), 1-28.

⁹Locher, 28.

10Henry J. Hatch, "Our Future as Soldiers and Engineers," Transcript of a speech presented to the Engineer Commanders Conference, Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., 29 April 1990.

11 This event took place during JCS exercise Cabanas 85 in Honduras. I was with the 36th Engineer Group Commander, Col. Paul Y. Chinen when he questioned the farmer. He realized the government had done nothing to prepare the local citizens for the project. We became, without realizing it, the "ugly Americans".

12See the following articles for additional discussions on the principles of nation assistance. Philip M. Jones, "Engineer Operations," Engineer (November 1989), 4-11; Tommy A. Lunderg and Robert N. Martin, Third World Developmental Assistance: The Engineer Contribution (Carlisle Barracks: U.S. Army War College); Boyd D. Houck, "Nation Assistance: An Evolving (But not New) Concept," Engineer (April 1992):

11-16; and Terry L. Rice, "Forging Security Through Peace," Military Review (April 1992) : 14-26.

13philip M. Jones, "Engineer Operations," <u>Engineer</u> (November 1989): 4.

14After Action Report, 9.

 $^{15}{
m This}$ is a translated transcript of President Oscar Aries speech taken from a vido of the closing cermony.

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 <u>Developmental Assistance: The Engineer Contribution.</u>